



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 20, 2024

To: The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair, House Ways & Means Committee

Re: Letter of Support - House Bill 599 - Maryland Community Investment Corporation -
Establishment (Housing and Community Development Financing Act of 2024)

Dear Chair Atterbeary:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to support House Bill 599, which would improve access to quality, affordable, and stable housing in Maryland—contributing to better health outcomes—and also boost economic growth for all Marylanders.

Maryland hospitals care for millions of people each year, around-the-clock. In addition to the care they provide, they evaluate factors inside and outside of their organizations to promote the health and the well-being of the populations they serve and the tens of thousands they employ. Hospitals are committed to addressing the social drivers of health, which includes housing.

The Department of Health and Human Services defines housing insecurity as high housing costs in proportion to income, poor housing quality, unstable neighborhoods, overcrowding, or homelessness.¹ As an important social determinant of health, housing security must be addressed when developing goals for accessibility or quality of care. Unstable housing can increase the risk of infectious or chronic disease and exacerbate previously existing health conditions.²

HB 599 will establish the Maryland Community Investment Corporation, which is tasked with facilitating greater investment in and representation from low-income communities in the state. This promotes community buy-in and greater understanding of the pressing issues that are preventing the community from reaching their full potential.

For these reasons, we request a *favorable* report on HB 599.

For more information, please contact:
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¹ Cutts, D. B., Meyers, A. F., Black, M. M., Casey, P. H., Chilton, M., Cook, J. T., Geppert, J., Ettinger de Cuba, S., Heeren, T., Coleman, S., Rose-Jacobs, R. Frank, D. A. (2011). US Housing insecurity and the health of very young children. *American journal of public health*, 101(8), 1508-14. Retrieved from: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3134514/

² Taylor, L. (2018). Housing and Health: An Overview of the Literature. *Health Affairs*. Retrieved from: <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hpb20180313.396577/>.